3 facts prevented formal indictments

The county grand jury investigating police spying cited three reasons Monday for not returning any indictments.

First, the jury said, "was the realization that the return of indictments could and probably would be used by city officials to shift the public's attention away from the grave threat to individual rights and freedoms posed by abusive police intelligence activity," outlined in the jury's report.

Second, the jury reported, the statute of limitations protects some individuals who committed criminal acts and that the most culpable — the department's top brass — were protected by "level upon level" of policemen who refused to testify.

Third, the jury said the quality of evidence was a factor. Many key witnesses are dead, some evidence was destroyed and "the testimony of witnesses would be unsupported."